

The President's Daily Brief

23 November 1971

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

President Yahya has declared a national state of emergency following reports of heavy fighting along the East Pakistani border. (Page 1)

In Cambodia, South Vietnamese forces are moving virtually unopposed along Route 7 in the initial phase of a campaign against Communist main force units. (Page 2)

West German

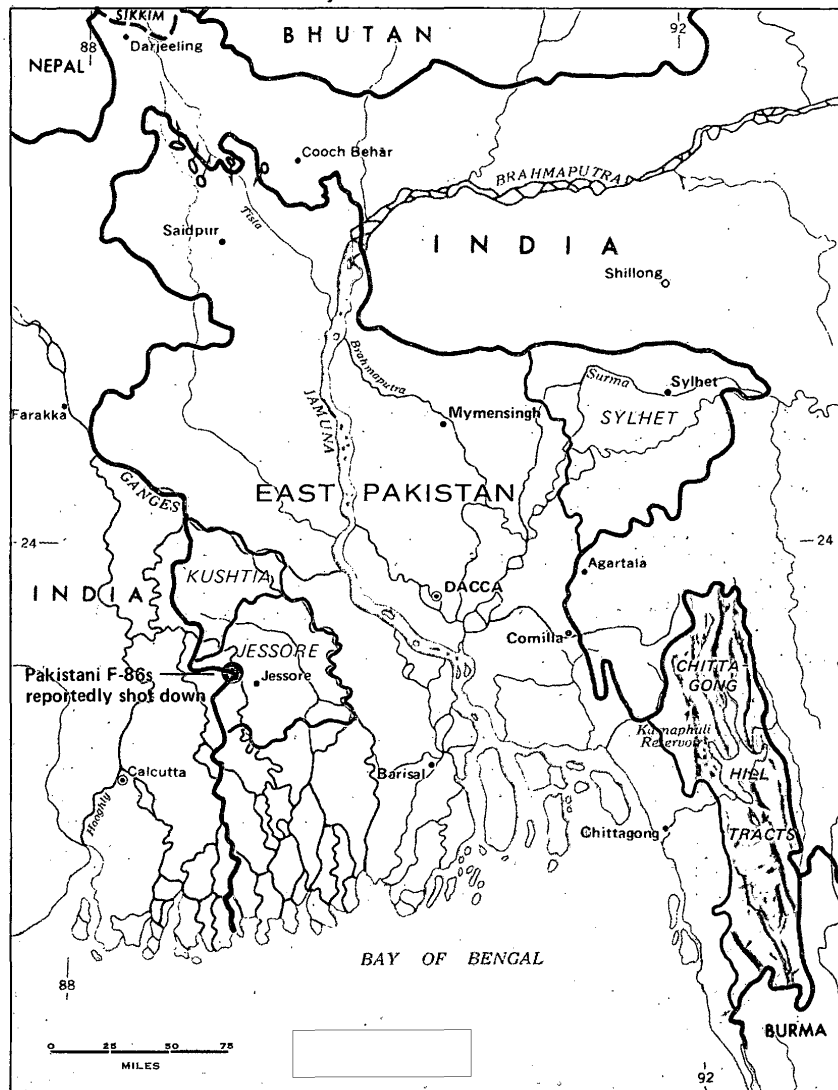
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A report that Moscow will resume selling gold ties in with recent heavy purchases of food from Western countries. (Page 4)

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INDIA - EAST PAKISTAN: Major Clashes in Border Areas



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INDIA-PAKISTAN

President Yahya today declared a national state of emergency, stating that "foreign aggression" had been launched against Pakistan. This declaration followed a day in which the Pakistani press reported the Indians had mounted an offensive in the Jessore area with units of two infantry divisions supported by armor.

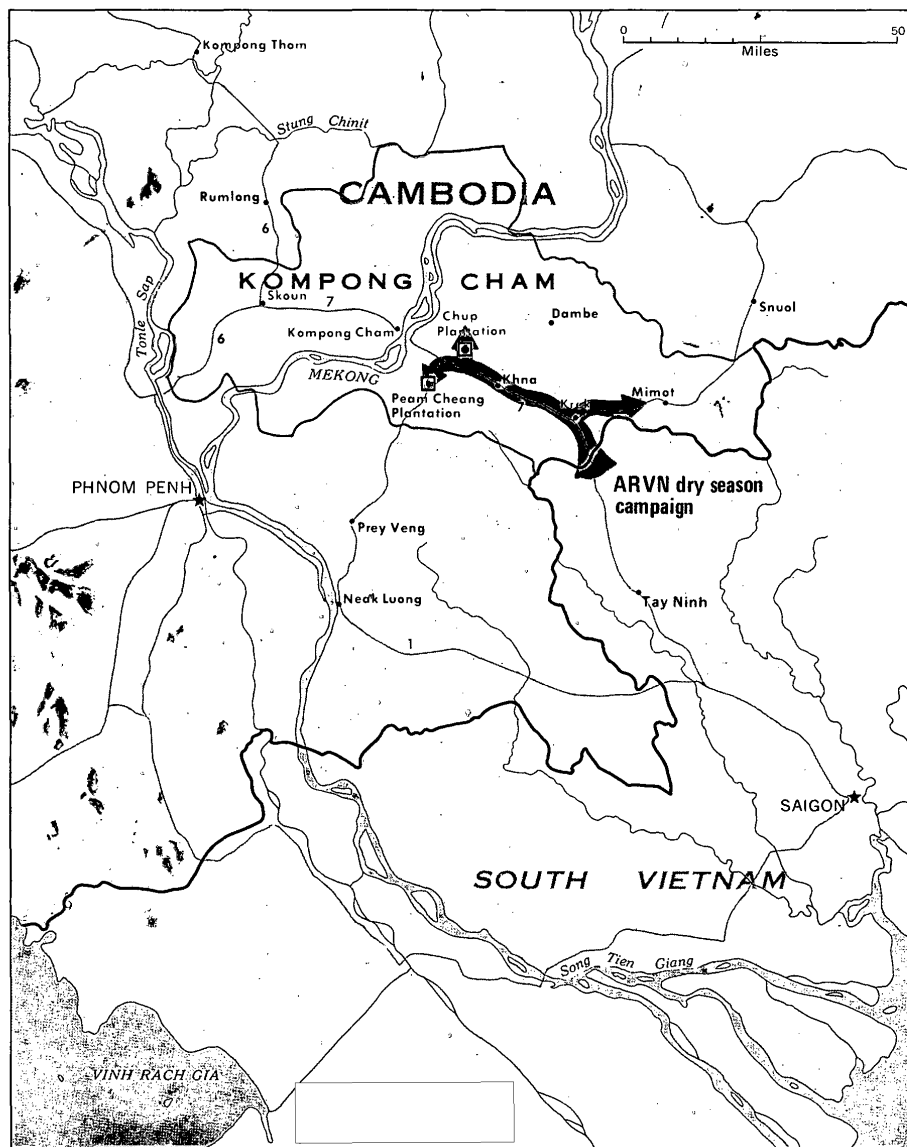
The press also reported attacks in the Sylhet district and in the Chittagong hills. Eighteen Pakistanis are said to have been killed--the highest figure yet admitted for any series of incidents.

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The Indians, while offering their conventional denial of direct involvement, acknowledge that the Mukti Bahini have "liberated" 14 villages in the Kushtia and Jessore districts and captured a number of Pakistani posts elsewhere on the province's western and northern borders. The Indians also claim to have shot down and captured the pilots of three Pakistani F-86 aircraft over Indian territory near Jessore.

The state of national emergency adds little to the authority of the Yahya government, and seems more a measure of Yahya's intent to dramatize both at home and abroad how seriously he views the situation in the East. Although he does not want war with India because his troops are badly outnumbered, especially in the eastern wing, as Indian provocations increase he may be approaching a decision that he has no choice but to strike back.

The guerrillas are not capable of defeating the Pakistani Army by themselves, and to ensure their success the Indians have been increasingly willing to commit Indian regulars. The Indians appear to have moved up the fighting to a point where their own forces are regularly operating in East Pakistan's border areas.



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CAMBODIA - SOUTH VIETNAM

South Vietnamese forces are moving virtually unopposed along Route 7 in eastern Kompong Cham Province in the initial phase of a new dry season campaign against Communist main force units in Cambodia. Airborne and armor forces, along with troops from two South Vietnamese divisions, are scheduled to secure the road as far as the village of Khna, where they intend to establish a major logistics base to support planned operations into the Chup and Peam Cheang plantations. Troops from a third division are to mount diversionary attacks eastward along Route 7 toward Mimot.

The South Vietnamese are responding to a two-week-old Cambodian request prompted by concern over the Communist offensive around Phnom Penh and along Route 6. The South Vietnamese drive may well force the Communists to pull their 9th Division regiments from operations in the Chenla II area, but enemy units around the capital were not drawn from the areas where ARVN will be operating.

The Cambodians evidently intend to keep a close watch over the South Vietnamese troops.

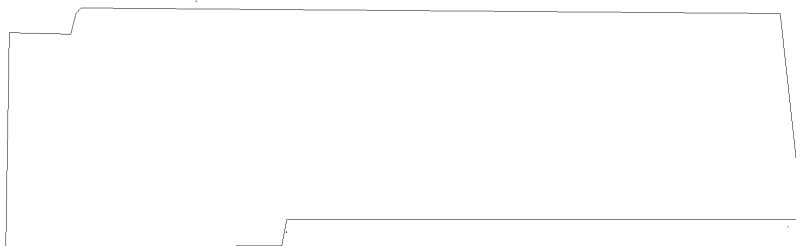
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Several minor but related Cambodian operations will be mounted along Route 1 in the southeast.

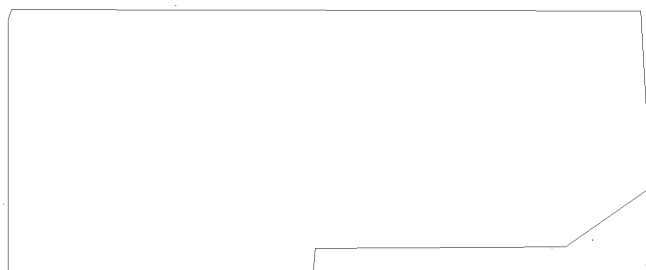
The South Vietnamese, for their part, intend to ensure that cross-border operations do not cut into defenses in South Vietnam. During the dry season last winter, this consideration caused President Thieu to fix limits on the duration and extent of involvement of his forces in Cambodia.

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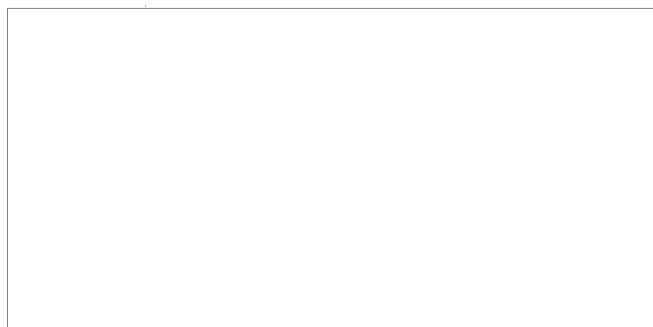
WEST GERMANY - USSR



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USSR

[redacted] Moscow will
resume selling gold during the remainder of the
year.

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A contract for the purchase of \$140 million worth of grain through two US companies, together with previous meat and grain contracts concluded with Canada and other Western countries, increases Soviet hard currency outlays for these items in fiscal 1972 to about \$600 million. The Soviets have not spent this much foreign exchange for food since 1963-65, when they financed large imports of wheat with gold sales. Since that time, the USSR has sold less than \$100 million worth of gold altogether, including about \$20 million this year.

The Soviets produce more than \$200 million in gold annually. They have built up their gold reserves from a low of about \$1 billion in 1965 to roughly \$2 billion at the present time. Soviet leaders may believe that reserves are high enough to permit annual sales up to the USSR's rate of gold production.

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